

*Lilija wishes to Thank you  
for your expressions of love,  
support & presence with us here today.*



*Tetyana Silis*

*18/10/1926 – 21/9/2020*



*Commencing 9:30am at Saint Panteleimon*

*Russian Orthodox Church*

*following onto Point Clare Cemetery*



Tetyana Gerasimovna Dobish was born on 18 October 1926 in the small village of Verbichno in the Volyn Region of what is now Ukraine. She was the third oldest child in an Orthodox family of seven surviving children.

Her father was a master of leathercraft and woodcraft. Her mother bore twelve children in all, but five died in infancy due to illness or accidents. During her childhood Tetyana often helped to look after her younger siblings.

In large families not every child had the opportunity to receive an education, but as Tetyana was so eager to learn her parents allowed her to go to school. She was the first child in her family to do so and learned to read and write. At that time Volyn was in Poland, and every school student had to learn the Polish language. Tetyana was a quick learner and was soon reading books in both Polish and Ukrainian to her siblings, also teaching them to read.

She was prevented from finishing her education by the outbreak of World War II. Her whole family suffered greatly at this time, enduring hunger and displacement. Searching for food in winter, they would dig out frozen potatoes from abandoned fields. In the springtime, they would search for green grass in the melting snow. They lived in hand-made tents and in dug-outs in the forest.

Her father was wounded by a fascist and soon died. His wife and children were left to manage on their own. Luckily, they had one older brother as the other two were too young. After returning from evacuation when the war was finished, Tetyana commenced studies at the Pedagogical College in a bigger city. After a year of successful studies, she was obliged to return home when a cow stepped on her mother's foot and badly broke it.

As Tetyana was the next on the age ladder she had to look after her younger siblings and the household until her mother recovered. Her teaching career came to an end. To support her family, she commenced a short course as a laboratory assistant in a dairy factory. This was a great opportunity and after finishing the course successfully she worked there for a few years.

It was then suggested to her that she work in the refectory of the Army Air Force Department. Here she would cook for and serve the soldiers in turn with other staff members, and here she met her future husband Viktor Silis, a Latvian. They fell in love and were married in 1955. Viktor brought his wife Tetyana to his homeland where they lived in Riga, Latvia's capital city. In 1957 their only daughter Liliya was born.

In 1958 Tetyana started working in a preschool, first as carer and then as cook. She continued in this role with dedication for 30 years. In 1973 she lost her husband and never remarried.

In 1996, at 70 years of age, she travelled to Australia on a family reunion visa to be with her daughter and her only grandchild, Leonid. Here in Australia she finally met with her first cousin Archbishop Hilarion, now Metropolitan Hilarion, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia & New Zealand, who had helped her daughter and grandson to settle in Sydney in 1991.

Through all her life Tetyana practised and cherished her Russian Orthodox faith and passed this on to her daughter and grandson. Tetyana was very hard working, looking after her siblings along with her own family.

Loving but strict in her everyday routines, adoring her daughter and grandson but keeping them in line. She was a great cook and gardener and a caring and generous person. She had many friends whom she loved dearly and cared for until the last days of her life.

Tetyana Gerasimovna will be with us in our hearts forever. God bless her soul!  
Thank you so much for everything you did for everyone.  
Rest in peace dear Tanechka, dear mother, dear grandmother, dear friend!

